

ARC Update

Department Of Architecture Co-Organizes International Conference

Department of Architecture co-organized the international conference "Climate Change and Urban Poverty: Infrastructure of Development" with BRAC Development Institute and Brooks World Poverty Institute of Manchester University. The conference was preceded by two day long Rajendrapur conversation and field visits to Narayanganj and Korail in Dhaka. Huraera Jabeen, Senior Lecturer and Professor Fuad H Mallick, Chairperson jointly presented a paper on "Climate Change, Urban Poverty and the Built Environment" in one of the conversation sessions in Rajendrapur. On this occasion an article has been published in The Daily Star emphasizing on the challenges and opportunities for the designers of built environment working with urban poor in the context of climate change. Khondokar Hasibul Kabir, Senior Lecturer and Aminur Rahman, Lecturer of PPDM also joined the discussions in conversation and conference.

Angan Travel Sketch

Musa Ibrahim, a student of the Postgraduate Programs in Disaster Management, along with his teammates, shared experience of their expedition to Langsisa Ri in Angan travel sketch titled as "Towards the Everest" on 27th January, 09. Their expedition was North Alpine Club Bangladesh's (NACB) first stride to Mount Everest. Musa Ibrahim, Towhid Hossain and Shamsul Alam reached the peak of Langsias Ri on 1st December, 2008 among the six members. At this expedition they climbed 6310m or 20700ft. The whole team is very excited for the great success and do believe that they are now one step ahead to reach the pick of Mount Everest. The wonderful images and lively description of the expedition made the audiences excited and inspired.

Angan Lecture By Professor Simon Guy

Prof. Simon Guy, Head, Department of Architecture, Manchester University delivered an Angan lecture in the Department of Architecture on 29th January, 2009. His discussion topic was "Sustainable Architecture: Competing Perspectives". The session was very lively and generated interest through participation by students and faculty. Earlier he and Prof. Dvaid Hulme also of Manchester University visited several design studios and expressed keen interest in the work of the students.

New Faculties

Three new faculty members joined the department. Sajid Bin Doza joined as Lecturer II. He did his M.Arch from BUET. His dissertation topic was "Analysis and Identification of Spatial Pattern in Rajshahi Old Town". An exhibition was held in Alliance Francaise on his architectural sketches titled 'ENTITY-sketches of heritage'. He had been teaching at the Department of Architecture, State University for last four and half years. He achieved national and international awards in co curricular activities.

Mohammad Shafiqul Alam joined as Lecturer II. After graduating in civil engineering from BUET in 2004, he joined in Accident Research Institute (ARI) of BUET as a researcher. He did his Masters in Earth quake engineering and engineering seismology from University of Joseph Fourier, Grenoble, France and Rose School, University of Pavia, Italy. His dissertation was on the seismic loss assessment of Dhaka city by displacement based methodology. He worked as a lecturer in civil engineering department of Presidency University.

Tanjina Khan joined as Teaching Assistant. She completed her Bachelor of Architecture from BRAC University in 2008. Her final year thesis title was "Puppet Animation Theater and Children Center". She won the furniture design completion arranged by Hatil, 2004. She did her internship in the office of renowned Architect B V Doshi. She has been awarded Vice Chancellor's Gold medal for outstanding performance.

BDI Update

Pathways of Women's Empowerment, South Asia Hub

The Pathways of Women's Empowerment Research Programme Consortium (RPC) has had an eventful few months. With the first phase of the Research Programme drawing to an end in March 2009, members have been busy attending key events to network and disseminate information, completing research papers and preparing for the Programme's Mid-term Review conference in January.

In November, Maheen Sultan, Sohela Nazneen and Samia Rahim attended the 11th AWID Forum on "The Power of Movements" in Cape Town, South Africa that took place from 14 - 17 November, 2008. The Forum brought together women's rights activist from all over the world to debate and strategize about how to build stronger women's movements globally. At the AWID Forum, Pathways members took part in the following panels:

i) Maheen Sultan and Sohela Nazneen presented on the panel "The NGO-ization of women's organizations and its implications for feminist organizing".

ii) Samia Rahim moderated a talk show hosting Andrea Cornwall, Mbuyiselo Botha and Henry Armas titled "Women's Empowerment: what do men have to do with it"? Tremendous interest was shown in the topic with about 200 people turning up for the session, that was booked in a room with a capacity for 20. A lot of questions were asked in the discussion afterwards and the need to engage and recognize more men in discussions of feminisms was greatly felt.

iii) Maheen Sultan facilitated the talk show hosted by the Women's Health and Rights Advocacy Partnership (WHRAP) titled "Building strong partnerships for improved sexual and reproductive health rights and rights in South Asia."

iv) Maheen Sultan also facilitated a panel organised by Naripokkho on the Doorbar Network's experience of movement building.

Samia Rahim was selected to participate in the Feminist Technology Exchange (FTX), that was organized by the Association for Progressive Communications in partnership with AWID and Women's Net, that took place in Cape Town, South Africa from November 10-12, 2008 preceding the AWID Forum. At the FTX, Samia enrolled in the track for Digital Story Telling and produced a digital story called "Looking.." that narrates her experiences of race, class, religion and other identities that have left a mark on her.

Following the AWID Forum, Maheen Sultan, Sohela Nazneen, Zarina Rahman Khan and Amena Mohsin took part in the Building Constituencies Thematic Meeting of Pathways which was held from 18-22 November, 2008 in Cape Town. The Local Governance team of Bangladesh presented the first draft of their paper on Women in Local Government there. Sohela Nazneen and Maheen Sultan presented a draft of the paper on constituency building by women's organisations.

Samia Huq, Research fellow from the Pathways team, joined a special discussion organised by Nijera Kori regarding the spread of Islamic fundamentalism in Bangladesh and what this might mean for women's activism on the 21st of November 2008.

In December, Sahida Khondaker, Aanmona Priyadarshini, and Shaila Yasmin Kona participated in a training that taught the use Participatory Video for research purposes. This training was organized by the Citizenship DRC, also based at BRAC University, from 13 - 15 December, 2008.

Samia Huq and Firdous Azim joined a special discussion organised by BRAC Development Institute (BDI) on "Globalising Development Knowledge" held on the 18th of November, 2008. This event was jointly organised by IDS, and Naila Kabeer from the Pathways team was also part of this group.

On 11th January, 2009 Dr. Sohela Nazneen was invited to be a panelist on RTV's live talk-show "Road to Democracy". Regarding the policies around female migrant workers, Sohela debated whether the government was successfully negotiating on behalf of women when exporting labour to different countries and giving due importance to skill sets available. She also brought into the discussion an analysis of women's development strategies listed in the Election Manifesto's of the leading political parties in the recent elections, highlighting the findings of the Pathways research on the Discourses of Women's Empowerment. This sparked a lively debate especially because the one of the panelists, Dr Atiur Rahman, was a writer of one of the election manifesto.

The Pathways Programme held it's Mid-Term Review Conference in Cairo, Egypt from 20-24 January which was also attended by representatives of the programme's funder, DFID. Eight members of the Bangladesh

team attended the conference and the following presentations were made:

- .Maheen Sultan 'Stories of Change: Life Stories, Documentary-Making and Self-Reflections'
- .Naomi Hossain, Sohela Nazneen, Firdous Azim and Maheen Sultan 'Discourses on Women's Empowerment in Bangladesh'
- .Simeen Mahmud, Maheen Sultan and Naila Kabeer 'The Significance of Work: Varied Meanings and Multiple Empowerment Outcomes'
- .Simeen Mahmud, Maheen Sultan and Sheikh Tariquzzaman 'Community Health Workers as Agents, Subjects and Objects of Change: Individual, Familial and Community Level Transformations'
- .Naila Kabeer 'Cents and Solidarity: Work, Collective Action and Women's Empowerment in Bangladesh'
- .Samia Rahim copresenting with Pathways Communications Team 'Communicating for Change'
- .Aanmona Priyadarshani and Samia Afroz Rahim 'Women Watching TV: Surfing Between Fantasy and Reality'
- .Samia Huq 'Islam in Urban Bangladesh: Between Negotiation and Appropriation'
- .Firdous Azim 'New Challenges for Secular Feminism in Bangladesh'
- .Zarina Rahman Khan and Amena Mohsin 'Women's Empowerment through Local Governance: Emerging Issues and Debates in Bangladesh'
- .Sohela Nazneen and Maheen Sultan 'Opportunistic Overtures, Distancing and Mobilizing Support: Women's Organizations Negotiating Legitimacy and Space in Bangladesh'

The review conference was followed by a Management Committee Meeting on 24th January evening that was attended by Maheen Sultan, Coordinator of Pathways South Asia.

A Communications Training for the Pathways Communication Team took place from 26-28 January to formulate a strategy around effective communications and Samia Rahim, the communications officer of the South Asia hub, attended this.

The Pathways team is now busy finalizing the research papers presented at the Review Conference in order to publish them in various book volumes and is also planning for the second phase of the research programme.

BDI and Department of Architecture hosts International Conference on Urban Poverty and Climate Change

BRAC Development Institute Department of Architecture, BRAC University in association with Brooks World Poverty Institute, University of Manchester hosted the International Conference on Climate Change and Urban Poverty - Infrastructures of Development on 28 January, 2009, at BRAC Centre. The conference focused on the pressing issues of climate variability on the living conditions of the urban poor. Participants from different countries, including, South Africa, UK, Malaysia, India, and Pakistan presented papers, focusing on various dimensions of climate change effects on urban centres around the world. Honourable Minister of Finance, Mr. A.M.A Muhith was the Chief Guest while BRAC Founder and Chairperson, Mr. Fazle Abed was the Special Guest. Professor Jamilur Reza Choudhury, VC BRAC University chaired the opening session.

Prior to the conference, academics from BWPI and BDI and BRAC University and other notable academics engaged in a two day long workshop at Rajendrapur, focusing on issues of health, governance, built environment, livelihoods and community resilience to impacts of climate change on urban centres. Professor Caroline Moser, Director of Global Urban Research Centre at University of Manchester presented the key paper on "Towards pro-poor adaptation to climate change in the urban centres of low- and middle-income countries". Professor David Hulme, Professor Tony Addison and Professor Simon Guy were also at "Rajendrapur Conversation". By the end of the workshop, research questions were identified which will guide future action research and policy interventions.

CfL Update

Chinese Spring Festival @ BRAC University

Language and Culture are interrelated; one cannot exist or be understood without the other. The Centre for Languages (CfL), BRAC University, celebrated the Chinese New Year - the year of Ox, on Friday, January 23rd, 2009 with both the importance and the relevance of language and culture in mind. The guest speaker

Counsellor Liu Sanzhen was gratified by the ceremony and Professor Jamillur Reza Choudhury, Vice Chancellor of BRACU, presided over the occasion. The Academic Coordinator of CfL, Sheikh Shams also conveyed his vote of thanks.

CfL's collective fascination to inspire is what enabled them to host this Cultural function, ornamented with Chinese and Bangla songs and dances to welcome the New Year. The songs were sung by both the students of BRAC University and participants from the Development Professional Programme (DevPro) at BRAC University. The Counsellor was very impressed by the festivities and spoke about the traditions of the New Year as it is celebrated in his home country. The celebration flourished because of CfL's unconditional love for culture and languages and undivided dedication in making the programme successful. Chinese is the first foreign language course offered in BRAC University. This was possible after Lu Min, a Chinese Instructor, joined the CfL team. CfL is excited to plan a few more festivities to promote Culture and Language in the university so that the students and the faculty can get exposed to the cultures of the languages that are going to be offered in the future.

Collaboration in Country Wide Teaching Training

The Centre for Languages (CfL) has extended its support to improve the quality of English language skills of BRAC Primary School (BPS) teachers working for the under privileged children in collaboration with BRAC Education Programme (BEP). With this view, CfL prepares for a four-module course to train the teachers in order to develop their standard of English language and teaching methodology after several interactions, discussions, class observations and focus group discussions with teachers, trainers and students of BPS in Manikgonj. Initially, CfL launched the piloting phase on January 17, 2009 with 80 teachers at Savar Training and Resource Centre (TARC) which will end in August 2009. CfL hopes to stand beside BEP to facilitate the same training with more than 32,000 BEP school teachers nationwide in the near future.

CfL Lecturer Sanjoy Banerjee Promoted to Lecturer II

Sanjoy Banerjee of Centre for Languages (CfL) has been promoted to Lecturer II effective from January 2009. He obtained two Master's Degrees: one in English Language and Literature from Islamic University and another in English Language Teaching (ELT) from Dhaka University. He also earned diplomas in two European languages: Spanish (Institute Cervantes) and French (Dhaka University). Sanjoy has conducted academic researches in the field of Language Teaching and Learning, and some of his papers are in the process of review to be published. Not only has Sanjoy excelled in language pedagogy and related research, he has also written two books for MA (final) students under the National University of Bangladesh: Critical Analysis of Modern Drama and Modern Poetry published by Friends' Book Corner.

CfL Lecturer Mohammad Aminul Islam Obtains MDS from BRACU

Mohammad Aminul Islam, Lecturer at the Centre for Languages (CfL) has successfully completed a Masters of Development Studies (MDS) from BRAC University in February 2009. His Dissertation topic was entitled "An Exploration of the Assessment for English (Compulsory) at the Secondary School Certificate Examination of Dhaka Board." He is also the recipient of a number of degrees including: BELT (Bachelor in English Language Teaching) from Bangladesh Open University, BA and MA (English) from the National University.

CfL Lecturer Liza Reshmin Presents a Paper at East West University

Liza Reshmin participated and presented a paper entitled "An Anatomy of his Loss: Reading Kiran Desai's Inheritance of Loss" in the Second International Conference held at East West University on Democracy, The "New World Order" and English Studies from December 12th - 13th 2008.

CfL Faculty Members Completed Online Language Teaching Courses Supported by U.S. State Department

In Fall 2008, three faculty members from CfL were selected to join the online courses supported by the U.S. Department of State from three renowned American universities.

S.M. Anwar Uddin completed a course entitled Teaching Business English (TBE) from the University of South Carolina, Liza Reshmin - Critical Thinking from University of Oregon, and Suma Saha - Teaching English to Young Learners (TEYL) from the University of Maryland, Baltimore County. The three faculty members took these courses as part of their continual development and for the benefit of the students. They have been engaged in applying skills and techniques they have learned from these courses.

ESS Update

Workshop on "Mental Health and Counseling"

The counseling team of BRAC University has conducted a workshop on January 24, 2009, for the students of residential semester titled "Mental health and counseling" under the supervision of Mahbuba Naznin Sani, Lecturer, ESS. It covered three key issues like physical health, mental health and need for counseling. Emphasis was put on student's mental health and how they can search out professional help if they need. 132 students participated in the workshop. Workshop method was fully participatory and students asked various questions on mental health and counseling help. They shared their psychological problems with the facilitator and sought solutions to the problems.

ESS Seminar Series

Chowdhury Rashad Shabab, part-time faculty member of ESS made a presentation on "Credit Derivatives and Global Financial Crisis" on January 22, 2009 at ESS Conference Room. Students and faculty members of the department participated in the seminar. In a lively question answer session followed by the seminar Mr. Shabab gave answers to the queries of the audiences.

Faculty Members are back after completion of higher studies:

After completion of MA in Economics from the New York University, United States, under Fulbright Scholarship, Sakiba Zeba, Lecturer, ESS has returned to the department.

Humaira Hossain, Lecturer, ESS has also returned back to the department after completion of MA in Economics from Nottingham University, United Kingdom.

New Faculty Members in the Department

Three faculty members have joined in the Department of ESS as Lecturer.

-Takrima Sayeda, completed MA in Economics in International Development from the International University of Japan, Japan.

-Haydory Akber Ahmed, previously worked as a Senior Research Associate of Institute of Governance Studies, BRAC University. He did Masters in International Economics from University of Birmingham, United Kingdom.

-Meheri Tamanna, did MSS in Public Administration from the University of Dhaka.

Seminar Participation by ESS Faculty Member

Dr. Manjur Karim, Associate Professor of the Department of ESS chaired a session in "International Conference on Globalization and Literature" , organized by the East-West University held on January 02, 2009. Dr. Karim was the speaker in the seminar titled "Birthday of Aktaruzzaman Ilyas", organized by Pratirodh Parba, held on January 09, 2009 at Shanskriti Bikash Kendra, a non-government organization of Bangladesh. On January 16, 2009 Dr. Karim was the speaker in the 'Assessment of National Election, 2008'.

Faculty member participated in the Conference on Autism

Mahbuba Nazneen Sani, Lecturer and Counselor of the Department of ESS participated in the "Third South Asian Conference on Autism", organized by Social Welfare Department, Government of Bangladesh, held on January 16 & 17, 2009. The main theme of the workshop was 'Support through Understanding'.

Faculty Participation in BRAC DEV-PRO

Iftekharul Haque and Fahmida Saadia Rahman faculty members of ESS, had taken classes in the Certificate Course on Development Professionals Program (Dev-Pro), on January 31- February 01, 2009, at BRAC-TARC, Gulshan, Dhaka. The training program was organized by the Training Division, BRAC and BRAC University for the mid-level managers of BRAC. Ms. Rahman gave lecture on the basic concepts of Economics and Mr. Haque gave lecture on the Economy of Bangladesh.

ENH Update

Undergraduate Thesis Presentation

As a requirement of the ENG 466: Thesis course, the graduating students (Fall 2008) of the Department of English and Humanities gave their thesis presentations on 4th January 2009. The following is a list of thesis presentations given by the graduating students:

Sanam Ara Amin: It's The Economy, Stupid: Contemporary Postmodern Fiction and its Capitalist roots
Reeham Chowdhury: Evaluating and Designing Some Components of Fourth Grade English Textbook of BRAC Primary Schools.

Tahia Khair: Instrumental Motivation appears to be more effective and more powerful in facilitating Second Language Learning in comparison with Integrative Motivation

Lulu Marzan Salma: Antiheroes in Modern Literature

Farzana Rahman: Trapped in Desire: Feminine desire and interracial complexities

Master's Thesis Presentation

As a requirement of the ENG 699: MA Thesis course, two graduating students (Fall 2008) of the Department of English and Humanities gave their thesis presentations on 4th January 2009:

Asif Iftexhar: Colonial Representations & Post-colonial Realities

Saushan Rahman: Representation of the Repressed in Indian Literature

Eng 114 Study Tour to Jahangirnagar University

The students of the Eng 114: "Introduction to Drama" went on an excursion to the Jahangirnagar University on 24th January 2009. The purpose was to visit the Greek Theatre established there by the noted dramatist, late Professor Salim Al-Deen. This gave the students a better appreciation of the theory and design of ancient Greek theatre which is a part of their curriculum. They were then taken on tour of the English Department, the library and the department of Drama and Dramatics where the students of Jahangirnagar University presented a very lively and interactive dramatic performance for our students. After the tour, they had lunch at the cafeteria and enjoyed the landscape of the beautiful residential campus. The tour was organized by the course teacher Ms. Rukhsana R. Chowdhury. Lecturers Ms. Asifa Sultana and Ms. Roohi Huda also accompanied the students on the study tour.

Computer Club Update

Project for Computer Game Development

A foreign speaker Andy Fowlston visited BRACU on 22nd of January, 2009 to discuss with BRACU students about "Project for computer game development". Andy Fowlston is a software engineer and teacher/trainer with experience in the interactive entertainment industry working on games for Electronic Arts and Microsoft. He has been living in Bangladesh for the past three years and working to bring games here. About 80 students were present in that event. Both current students and graduates of BRAC University participated and listened to different aspects of computer game development and the qualities needed to successful game development.

In short, his message was:

My name's Andy and I have four questions for you.

- * Do you enjoy computer games?
- * Are you interested in making your own computer games?
- * Are you a competent, enthusiastic software engineer?
- * Do you want to work as part of a small multi-disciplinary team? If you answered yes, please find out more about our project at http://andy.ntiers.net/are_you_good.html

After the discussion Mr. Andy invited the students to participate in an assessment competition and submit their projects by applying online. Andy will be running a training session of a game development project and will bring industry knowledge and skills to it

Applicants will be chosen based on their submissions to make up the training group.

Selected students from that competition will be trained for several months and given an opportunity for a Game Development Project during 2010-2011

Participated in the Club Fair

BRAC University Computer Club (BUCC) Participated in the Club Fair "Britter Baire" organized by BUDTF on the January 29, 2009 with a great enthusiasm. Members of BUCC were presented in the BUCC stall through out the fair and encouraged students from all levels to join this club. BUCC members told the interested students about various activities of the club such as national and international competition for programming

skills, graphics design, website and software development, course help desk etc. BUCC members also encouraged students to participate in the Programming Training workshop for the coming ACM competition. New students joined the Club with great enthusiasm. A live quiz was also held during the fair. Winners will be given attractive prizes soon.

Challenge 24 is the 9th extreme challenge homepage where everyone will have a chance to get prepared for the next Extreme Challenge. Challenges are related to the field of algorithm theory, information and coding theory, databases, computer networks, computer graphics, software ergonomic, control theory and artificial intelligence.

BUCC is very thankful to Challenge24 for the banners and videos they have provided to BUCC for display at the Club Fair Spring 2009 of BRAC University. All the videos and banners helped the student of BRAC University to put extra light on the fact that will help them to determine in which way they can increase their knowledge on solving problems. <http://www.challenge24.org>

2FUNMAIL.com

2Funmail is the first full-service software gaming portal in Bangladesh. It was launched in the 1st of January. Some BUCC members went there for Launch Event in Safura Tower, Banani, 15th floor, on 18th January, 5pm.

Their aim is to bring all the thrills of online games in one awesome portal. It is the largest gaming portal of Bangladesh. This gaming portal has more than 100 world-class online games.

They have world's best, most wanted, and the most addictive international games. Cutting-edge gaming genres such as MOG's (Multiplayer Online Games) will soon be featured as well.

Considering all the age groups, they have created high quality games and will trigger this revolution by offering only the best in game. These high quality games are fun to play with friends and family members.

Currently, BUCC is considering a proposal from 2funmail.com to arrange a gaming contest in association with them. It may be noted that BUCC organized the last WCG 2008 School, College & University Championship at BRAC.

Institute of Educational Development (IED) Update

A Visit by Professor Mike Harrison

Michael Harrison, retired Dean for Teaching and Learning at the School of Education, University of Manchester in the UK, visited IED from 3-9 January, 2009. Prof. Harrison is now a consultant for the National College for School Leadership. His visit was in connection with the delivery of the Post-Graduate Diploma and MEd programme on Educational Leadership, Planning and Management which IED expects to offer in June 2009. An IED-team worked with Mike on the details of content and delivery of the programme. The programme is intended to develop participants from within the Bangladeshi education community in their understanding of theories and principles of leadership and help them to see how these concepts can be applied to improve performance of students and institutions.

A Visit by Dr. Mainus Sultan

Dr. Mainus Sultan visited IED from 2-15 December, 2008. Dr. Sultan is an adjunct faculty at the University of Massachusetts, USA and has extensively worked in the USA, Laos, Afghanistan and Zimbabwe and his work concentrates on management capacity building, non-formal education, qualitative research, assessment and evaluation, teacher training & curriculum development.

Dr. Sultan's visit was in connection with providing technical assistance to the Academic and Training section of IED to develop its capacity and assisting in building up a core Training Team in IED that will undertake the task of training of trainers and provide training support to the various activities of IED. Dr. Sultan also assisted IED Academic and Training team in planning of the delivery of the MEd program in Educational Leadership, Planning and Management.

A Visit by Subir Shukla

Subir Shukla visited IED on 24-30 January, 2009. Mr. Shukla is a Delhi-based international education consultant and curriculum specialist, who has worked extensively with governments, non-governmental organizations and international agencies of countries including India, Afghanistan, Tanzania, Netherlands,

UK, USA and Bangladesh.

Subir Shukla's visit was in connection with developing a common understanding on key activities needed for developing national level curriculum for primary (and secondary) education in Bangladesh, and building resources and skills needed for curriculum development and its related areas (e.g. textbooks, materials, teacher development, assessment).

During his stay this time, Mr. Shukla also facilitated a 2-day national consultative workshop on 'Exploring the Challenges of Curriculum Development and Implementation' involving a wide range of stakeholders, especially government agencies such as PEDPII, NAPE and NCTB.

Workshop on Continuing Education Frame-work

Non-Formal Education/ Life-Long Learning (NFE/LLL) team of IED organized a workshop on "Continuing Education (CE) Frame-work" at IED conference room in December 2008. The purpose of the workshop was to develop CE frame-work for setting up CE standard to provide direction and achieve quality of life through CE.

The specific objectives were to develop a frame-work with a focus on 6 specific areas (Post Literacy, Quality of Life Improvement & Life skills, IGP, Career Development, Education and training program, Equivalency program, Future oriented program) to pave a smooth path for advancement in learning.

Through the workshop the presenters share proposed CE framework for setting up CE standard to achieve common quality of CE program.

Postgraduate Diploma in Early Childhood Development (ECD)

After a successful completion of Post-Graduate Certificate course in ECD, Early Childhood Development Resource Centre (ECDRC) has commenced its next phase of the course at Postgraduate Diploma in ECD in January 2009. The first course "Contemporary Issues in ECD" (ECD 526) was facilitated by Dr. Faith Lamb Parker, Associate Professor, Columbia University. The course was conducted from 4-15 January, 2009. Dr. Chowdhury SB Jalal, Senior Research fellow, Research & Evaluation Division, BRAC and Sakila Yasmin, Lecturer, IED, contributed as co-facilitators in this course.

World Bank Institute and IED plan joint training course

David Harding, Team Leader for Education at the World Bank Institute (WBI), Washington D.C. visited IED on 17 December for a planning meeting to organise a workshop on Educational Reforms Strategies in Dhaka early in 2009. WBI is interested in customising such a course, usually offered in Washington, for Bangladesh in collaboration with IED. Harding and Dr. Manzoor Ahmed, Senior Adviser, IED met Bangladesh Officials including the Secretaries of Ministry of Education, Ministry of Primary and Mass Education and the Economic Relations Division. The senior officials thought that the course would be helpful and agreed to offer government support for organising the course and designating participants for it. Dr. Harding saw the possibility of collaboration with BRAC University and other Institutions in the region to organise the course on a regular basis to serve countries in the region.

Manzoor Ahmed speaks at International Forum on Education of Ethnic Groups in Kunming, China

IED Senior Adviser, Dr. Manzoor Ahmed, attended as a resource person in the International Forum on Education of Ethnic Minorities organised by the UNESCO International Institute for Rural Education at Baoding, China. The Forum was held from 27-29 December at Kunming, capital of Yunnan province, taking advantage of the high proportion of ethnic populations in Yunnan and on-going programmes of cooperation among neighbouring countries of China, Laos, Vietnam and Myanmar for ethnic groups which transcended national borders. The UNESCO-supported Institute expressed interest in collaboration with IED to share experience of IED and BRAC initiatives in education to assist ultra-poor groups and promote rural transformation. Further exchange in this regard is planned in the near future.

National Consultative Workshop on 'Exploring the Challenges of Curriculum Development and Implementation'

A two-day long seminar cum workshop was organized by IED on 26 -27 January, 2009. The first half a day session termed as 'seminar' was focused on issues and concerns in our national curriculum practice where representatives from various government, non-government national and international organizations such as NCTB, NAPE, BAFED, PEDP II, UNDP, UNICEF, RNE, SDC, AISD, FIVDB, DAM, Plan Bangladesh, Save the Children-USA, CAMPE and BRAC participated. The welcome speech was given by Dr. Manzoor Ahmed,

Senior Advisor, IED who was one of the resource persons amongst the three. Dr. Siddiquir Rahman, Team Leader, PEDP II addressed on 'The Challenges in Curriculum from PEDP II Perspectives' and the Chief Guest, Prof. Haspia Bashirullah, Senior Member, NCTB (on behalf of Dr. Md. Masir Uddin, Chairman, NCTB) gave her speech on 'The Challenges in Curriculum from National Perspectives'.

The main workshop with the overarching aim to explore, identify and discuss challenges related to curriculum practice in Bangladesh primary education from different key stakeholders' perspective and in the light of the next phase of primary education development up to 2015 and onwards was facilitated by Subir Shukla, an international education consultant. The workshop was focused on few key questions and topics such as 'Envisioning our 'Child', What are the qualities we would like to develop/see in our children, Implications for curriculum, What are the difficulties that children and teachers face in the classroom and school' and so on. The key components were identified in groups and later shared and discussed in large groups. As an outcome of the workshop everyone including 10 senior curriculum specialists from NCTB shared the similar views that there should be a platform or network for going forward to developing a better curriculum framework in Bangladesh. To sum up the workshop discussion, everyone moved toward a consensus that a collaborative approach should be introduced within a short period of time.

Training on "Strengthening Skills Related to Child Friendliness"

With a view to strengthening skills related to child friendliness and as a venture towards promoting child friendly research, IED signed a contract on year-long episodic training with Inner Force, a capacity building organisation on early childhood development, child care, child psychology and development. November 2008 saw the launching of a five-day-long in-house capacity building training as an initial part of a year-long training program which would consist of a series of similar trainings. Focusing on "Communication and Motivation", Farida Akhtar, a developmental psychologist from Inner Force facilitated all of the sessions citing real instances from different case studies and relevant contexts. Starting from November 2, 2008 and ending on November 6, 2008, the training had altogether a number of fifteen sessions that encompassed the following topics and areas:

motivating a child, effective communicative style, nature of the learners, qualities of good communicator, socio-emotional support, socio-emotional development, motivation, care and support, socialization process, physical vs. mental growth, child's need, memory structure, socio-emotional development, attachment and bondage, self concept vs. egocentrism and finally on different basic components of child psychology. November's training on "Communication and Motivation" was followed by a two day-follow up in December 2008.

Second phase of the episodic training was focused on "Child Care and Child Development" and it took place from 11-15 January 2009. Below are some of the topics covered in the training:
socio-emotional development, children's needs, abuse and punishment, positive disciplining tools, etc.

MNS Update

Young Scientists of Asia Conclave, Bangalore, India

Ms. Moushumi Zahur participated in "Young Scientists of Asia Conclave, A Meeting of Concerned Young Scientists", held in Bangalore, India from January 15 to 17, 2009. The main theme of the seminar was "Pressing Problems of Humankind (Energy & Climate)". She participated in an open discussion session and shared the ideas and views with other participants representing different countries of Asia.

New Faculty Joining the Department

Dr. Rafiqul Islam joined the Department as an Assistant Professor in Statistics while Mr. Mo. Rokibul Islam and Mr. Khandker Md. Mahmudul Hasan joined as Lecturers in Mathematics and Physics respectively. All of them joined BRACU on January 15, 2009.

International Botanical Conference , Dhaka

Dr. Aparna Islam participated in the International Botanical Conference held at Dhaka from January 16-18, 2009. The theme of the Conference was "Challenge of botanists in overcoming the changing environment". The Conference was organized by the Bangladesh Botanical Society and was held at the Teachers - Students Centre (TSC), University of Dhaka. Scientists and researchers from home and abroad affiliated with different R&D institutions and universities attended the conference. Several papers were presented in eleven technical sessions. Dr. Aparna Islam acted as a rapporteur in the session entitled "Micro propagation

and in- vitro conservation". Ms. Jebunessa Choudhury, an MS student of biotechnology at BRACU presented a paper entitled "Establishment of a simple efficient in vitro regeneration protocol for locally grown tomato (*Lycopersicon esculentum* Miller) cultivars of Bangladesh" at the conference. The paper is based on her MS thesis work which is being carried out under the joint supervision of Dr Aparna Islam and Prof. Zeba I. Seraj of the University of Dhaka.

Topical Seminar

Mr. Al Amin Kabir presented a seminar talk entitled "CP Violation" on Thursday, January 22, 2009, at 10.00 am in Room AH-1501. The speaker elaborated the ideas of different symmetry principles of physics specially those applicable to particle physics. He showed how charge conjugation and parity symmetry were found to be maximally violated in nature and how they affected the evolution of our universe. He also delved into the reasons behind the predominance of matter over antimatter in the universe. The faculty members of the MNS Department and a few students attended the seminar. Lively discussion ensued the seminar.

International Conference on "Poverty and Climate Change-Infrastructures of Development"

Dr Mohammad Rafiqul Islam participated in a day - long International Conference on "Climate Change and Urban Poverty- Infrastructures of Development" held at BRAC Centre Auditorium, Dhaka on January 28, 2009. BRAC Development Institute, Department of Architecture, BRACU and Brooks World Poverty Institute, University of Manchester, UK; jointly organized the Conference. Mr. Abul Maal Abdul Muhith , Honourable Minister for Finance, Government of Bangladesh was the Chief Guest. Mr. Fazle Hasan Abed, Founder and Chairperson, BRAC was the Special Guest. The Conference was chaired by Professor Jamilur Reza Choudhury, Vice Chancellor, BRAC University.

SPH Update

MPH Programme

The 4th batch of the MPH Program has been successfully completed. The graduating students will attend the 4th Convocation to be held on 5th February 2009 at BCDM, Rajendrapur. The SPH is now preparing to welcome the 5th Batch MPH students. The next MPH Program is going to start on February 15, 2009. Before starting the classes on 15th February, there will be an orientation program at Savar TARC on February 14, 2009.

Events

Visit of Harvard Students to JPG SPH and BRAC

Four students from the Harvard School of Public Health visited the School and other projects of BRAC in Bangladesh. The group of students visited James P Grant School of Public Health on 5th of January. They held discussions with the faculty and staff of the School and tried to understand about the various academic and research activities of the School. The group of students also participated in the field trips arranged by BRAC. They observed health, education, micro-credit and other income generating projects operated by BRAC during their six days programme. The students actively participated in different group discussions with BRAC staff and BRAC beneficiaries. They tried to enhance their knowledge by the hands on experience in the field. One of the Interns from BRAC School of Public Health also participated in the field visits. Md Fariduzzaman Rana from BRAC communication division and Nakib Rajib Ahmed from James P Grant School of Public Health facilitated the students during their visit to BRAC School of Public Health and BRAC. The programme ended on 11th of January.

ASG on Biostatistics

As the School is growing it is leading many important research activities, and as most are using mixed method tools, it is necessary to have some knowledge about statistics. With this objective in mind, as well as to build and scale up capacity in statistics, the young professionals of the School has initiated a regular Bio-statistics session which is being held every week. After some formal and informal meetings to review and finalize the outlines and after getting a formal approval from the senior management, the plan turned into action on 11th January, 2009 with the strong desire and inspiration of all members. In January there were three sessions covering introduction to research steps, introduction to bio-statistics and frequency distribution, which were conducted by Dr. Nasima Selim, Mr, Tanvir Hasan and Mr. Shafiun Nahin Shimul.

Second short course on Qualitative Research Methodology, Thinking Qualitatively -2: Theory & Practice of Qualitative Research Methodology

The second short course on Qualitative Research Methodology, Thinking Qualitatively-2 was held from January 18-29, 2009 at SPH conference room. The course was primarily conducted by Shahaduz Zaman & Nasima Selim but other SPH and guest faculty were also involved. There were 22 participants from various development organizations like FHI, Action Aid, and also from BRAC, BRAC University IED & SPH who took part in the course.

5th ASG (Academic Group Study) Seminar

The Academic Study Group Seminar on Tuesday, January 20, 2009 focused on the importance of food as a part of health and wellbeing. The guest speaker for the seminar was Mr. Kazi Mamunur Rashid, Deputy Director of Institute of Sustainable Development at the University of Liberal Arts, Bangladesh. Mr. Rashid talked about the relationship between a man's body with the earth and spirituality. What we eat, when we eat and how we prepare our food define the degree of our physical and mental wellbeing. Time of sleep is also closely linked with our food intake and how our body processes the food that we take. He talked at length about the importance of protein, vitamins and minerals from vegetables and organically grown food as opposed to animal protein, sugar and soy bean oil as sources of ill-health. Participants asked questions regarding the challenges of maintaining a healthy diet given our lifestyle, dependence on others to prepare our food, and about availability of the healthier and organic choices of food. As a suggestion for maintaining good health, he stressed the importance of starting the change in diet by taking personal initiative and then moving on to motivating others in the process.

Faculty News

New Staff

Dr. Mofijul Islam completed his Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (MBBS) degree from Mymensingh Medical College in 2005. He was working in Incepta Pharmaceuticals as a product executive before he enrolled in MPH programme of James P Grant School of Public Health (BSPH) in 2008. After obtaining the MPH degree, he joined the School as a Research Associate on January 6, 2009. Currently he is working in "Realising Rights: Improving Sexual and Reproductive Health for Poor and Vulnerable Populations" project. His areas of interest are epidemiology, biostatistics, research methodology and mixed method research.

Taufique Joader completed his MBBS in 2006 and Internship training in 2007. On completion of the training he was selected for MPH program in James P Grant School of Public Health. He completed his MPH in 2008 and was awarded Allan Rosenfield Award for best overall performance among national students. He was one of the founding member and President of UN Youth and Students Association of Bangladesh; a renowned community based youth voluntary organization for leadership and capacity building. He has been working as Program Presenter of a health related live TV talk show 'Protidin' in RTV for last 2 years. He joined the School as a Research Associate on January 6, 2009. Presently, he is working on a multi-country research project 'Globalization as a social determinant of health: Influences on patterns of food consumption among young people in Asian Universities' under Centre for Qualitative Inquiry (CQI). His areas of interest include Medical Anthropology, Health System Management, Health Policy Planning and Financing, Epidemiology and Infectious/Tropical Diseases.

Faculty Activities

Dr. Sabina Faiz Rashid, Dr. Hilary Standing, Shahanoor Akter Chowdhury, and Mahrukh Mohiuddin attended the annual planning meeting of Realising Rights RPC (Research Programme Consortium) in Accra, Ghana, from January 8-10, 2009. The meeting was attended by the five partners of the Realising Rights Consortium, namely African Population and Health Research Centre, Kenya; BRAC University, Bangladesh; INDEPTH Network, Ghana; Institute of Development Studies, UK; and London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, UK. INDEPTH Network hosted and organised the meeting for this year.

Dr. Sabina Faiz Rashid, Associate Professor was invited to teach at the Masters of Science in International Health Department of Tropical Hygiene and Public Health, University of Heidelberg. She was visiting from January 18 to 31st, 2009.

Anwar Islam PhD attended an Asia workshop on Pay for Performance in Cebu, Philippines from 15th to 23rd of January. The workshop was based on Pay for Performance (P4P) approach i.e. providing incentives to

service providers lead to impressive improvements in their area of work such as immunization coverage, utilization of prenatal care, and deliveries attended by skilled birth attendants. Sponsored by USAID, AusAID, and the Center for Global Development, NORAD and the World Bank, this regional workshop welcomed 16 teams of three "stakeholders" from countries in Asia to learn about the Pay for Performance (P4P) approach to health system strengthening. A total of about 30 participants was present in the workshop. On behalf of USAID, the workshop was organized by the consortium Health Systems 20/20.

Shuborna Camellia and Eram Cooper attended the 3rd national course on Violence against Women and Role of Health Care Providers in Mumbai, India. The course was held from 13th to 21st January, 2009. A wide variety of health care providers which included nurses and medical staff, activists, researchers and doctors came from different parts of India to attend this course. There were also participants from Nepal. The main objective of the course was to sensitize health service providers in identifying and handling victims of violence. On the whole the course aimed at incorporating violence against women as a wider public health concern.

Mr. Shafiun Nahin Shimul, Lecturer of the School, attended a day long workshop held at BRAC center on "Urban DOTS: Challenges and Perspectives" on 19th January. In this workshop, different stakeholder from WHO, NTP, BRAC and other partner NGOs were present. As he was running a project related to the topic, it was a learning experience for him and he also shared some experiences of the research project he was conducting. At the ending session of the workshop there was a group work on 'lessons learned and way forward' and he took the lead of his group which was highly acclaimed by the participants. Apart from this he also participated in an international conference entitled 'Climate change and Urban poor-the infrastructure of development' held at BRAC center on 28th January which was organized by BRAC Development Institute, Department of Architecture and University of Manchester.

Shuborna Camellia and Shahanoor Akter attended a workshop on "Research on violence against women" held during 25-28 Jan 2009 at BRAC CDM in Rajendrapur. The workshop was organized by VAW Global Network with grants from the Swedish authority SIDA/SAREC. The main aims of the workshop were to: strengthen research collaboration between developing countries and develop a common VAW intervention research agenda that could be used for fund-raising.

Intermediary Workshop of EU Asia Link Project at Kerala, India

The project partners of EU Asia Link Project met in Kerala, India for the Intermediary Workshop in January 2009. The workshop was held at Achutha Menon Centre for Health Science Studies of Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences and Technology (SCTIMST). The meeting took place from 28th to 30th of January. Six representatives from the project's partner institutions were present in the meeting. Dr. Martine Collumbien from London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, Dr. K Mohandas and Dr. K R Thankappan from the hosting institute SCTIMST and Dr. Anwar Islam, Nakib Rajib Ahmed and Md Aminul Islam Khan representing the lead institution James P Grant School of Public Health, BRAC University were present in the event. The participants from the partner institution discussed about the implemented activities of the project, shared the challenges during implementation and planned for future activities to implement. The Intermediary Workshop successfully ended with an enthusiastic participation of the project partners. The final meeting for this project will take place in Bangladesh at the end of the project life cycle. The EU Asia Link Project : Building Partnership for Better Health is providing support to some of the School's activity and as well as helping the School with its capacity building along with the Asian and European partners.

RS Update

Semester Orientation

A daylong orientation program for the newly enrolled students of RS was held at Markuli hall on January 17, 2009. The first session was facilitated by Dr. Salehuddin Ahmed, pro-VC of BU, where all the staff and teachers of the Savar Campus introduced themselves to the students. In the second session Mahfuzul Bari Chowdhury, CS of Savar Campus, gave a briefing on RS and Savar Campus. Course teachers of the three basic courses of RS (Bangladesh Studies, Ethics and English) gave short briefings about their courses. In a session students worked in groups to make some campus norms which they themselves would follow during their stay at Savar Campus. Also, two senior students of RS fall 2008 shared their experiences with the new-comers in RS.

Workshop on Mental Health and Counseling

A workshop on Mental Health and Counseling has been conducted at Savar Campus on January 24 by the Counseling Team of the campus. A total of 112 students of residential semester participated in the workshop. They learnt about physical health, mental health, importance of mental health and counseling, when and where to seek a counselor, etc. There were presentation, group work, assessment session, psychological game for concentration and group discussion in the workshop. This workshop helped the students to learn to cope with a new environment and to ventilate their negative experiences by sharing with others.

Sports

In the badminton double of girls held on January 30, 2009 Surjalok became the champion, and of boys (held on the same day) Chhayaneer became the champion. In the badminton single of girls held on January 31, 2009 Surjalok became the champion and Surjamukhi the runner-up.

Seminar on Drug Abuse

A seminar on drug abuse was held on January 31, 2009. It was moderated by Brother Ronald Drahozal, CSC, director of APON (Ashokti Punarbashan Nibash). He explained how APON is working to provide drug addiction treatment and rehabilitation services and make these services readily available and accessible for the drug addicts. One of those persons who got recovery from addiction with the help of APON was present in the seminar to share his experience. All of the students of RS as well as some of the staff and teachers were present in the seminar. The audience got a real picture of drug abusing practices in Bangladesh.